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129]

[130]

Letter I.

TO THE THINKING PEOPLE OF ENGLAND,

ON THE AFFAIRS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

THINKING PEOPLE,

Amongst all the numerous subjects upon which you have discovered your acuteness of perception and profundity of thought, I know of none (except that of Pitt's *sinking fund*) which has drawn forth so brilliant a display of these qualities as the subjects connected with India; and, when I reflect on your wise notions about the riches derived to the *nation* from "our Empire in the East," I cannot wonder at the alarm that many of you now feel lest the curbing of the power of the East India Company, through the means of the now-proposed measure, should bring ruin upon England. In plain language, you have so long been deceived; you have so long listened, and loved to listen, to falsehoods; you have so long been the almost willing dupes of designing knaves; that there is scarcely a passage left by which truth can find its way to your minds. Nevertheless, I shall endeavour to disentangle the question, which is now so much agitating your wise and plodding noddles; I shall endeavour to strip this grand humbug of its covering; and, when I have so done, I shall leave you to the tricks of the several classes of mountebanks, who are striving for the upper hand in deceiving you.

Those, whose object is to deceive; who have falsehoods to make pass for truths; those persons generally endeavour to confuse and confound facts and circumstances as much as possible; and, in the present case, the real points at issue seem to have been wholly kept out of sight. Nay more, I would bet my life, that, if you were all examined one by one, not one out of 5,000 of you know what the words *East India Company* mean; that you have no more knowledge of the nature and effect of that Corporation than you have of what is passing in the moon; and that, when you read about the wars in India, it is with about as

much knowledge and advantage as you read, in Milton, about the Devils firing off canons in heaven.

This being my firm persuasion, I shall endeavour to make the subject clearly understood; and, when I have so done, I shall willingly leave, to be cheated still, every one who is fool enough to join in the clamours now raised and raising against the proposed measure of opening the trade to India.

This measure, it is said, by the partisans of the Company, *will ruin the Company*; that it will *break up their power*; that it will cause *the loss of India as a Colony*. I will not stop to dispute about this. I will take these propositions as granted; and, still I shall contend, that the measure ought to be adopted. It is useless, therefore, to enter into any details to show what the measure will do against the Company; for I am ready to assert, and to prove, and I trust that I shall prove, that the breaking up of the Company would be a great blessing to England; that Company being, and having long been, one of our greatest scourges, one of the chief causes of corruption and oppression.

The outline of the proposed measure is this: that, whereas the trade to India is now exclusively in the hands of the Company, the Ministers mean to make such a change as shall open the trade to other merchants. At present, in consequence of an agreement, made with the Government 20 years ago (which agreement is called a *Charter*), no merchant of this kingdom, except the Company, can trade with the East Indies; no ships but the East India Company's ships can go thither; but, the Ministers mean to introduce a measure (now that the Company's Charter is upon the point of expiring), which shall enable any merchant of this kingdom to trade to India. Of this proposed measure it is that the Company is complaining, and in opposition to it they are exciting the most violent clamours, representing it as an act of injustice as well as of impolicy.

Faction is endeavouring to make the question a *party* one, and the City of Lon-

don, actuated by narrow self-interest, is abetting, in some degree, the opposition, and joining in the clamours. But, the *people*, if they have not been quite bereft of their reason by conflicting falsehoods, ought to consider the question as one in which *they* are opposed to this domineering Company. It is with the *nation* that that Company has made a bargain; it is from the nation that they hold their Charter; and, it is for the nation to consider, whether that Charter shall be renewed; whether it shall again grant a monopoly of trade to a select body of men, to the exclusion of all the rest of the King's subjects.

It is not a little impudent in the Company to pretend that the nation is guilty of *injustice* in withholding this renewal. What would be thought of a tenant, who should set up a clamour against his landlord, because the latter refused to renew his lease? He would be called, at least, a very presumptuous man, and, if he endeavoured to show, that his landlord would *lose* by not renewing his lease, would not that landlord laugh in his face? The very endeavour to persuade the nation, that it will lose by not renewing the Charter, is enough to make any rational man distrust the views of those who make it.

In order to decide, whether a new Charter should be granted to the Company, we ought first to inquire how they have acted towards the nation in consequence of their last Charter. But, before we enter upon this inquiry, I will, in nearly the same words that I used seven years ago, give a brief description of that strange thing, called the East India Company.

You hear of great fortunes being made in the East; you hear of plunder enormous, and you see the plunderers come and elbow you from your homes; but, you never appear to perceive, that any part of this plunder is, either first or last, drawn from your own estates or their labour. You seem to think, that there are great quantities of goods, and of gold and precious stones in India; and, the only feeling which the acquirers of these excite, seems to be that of envy, and, in some instances, of emulation. But, that this proceeds from a gross error would, in the *two millions* lately paid to the East India Company out of the taxes of the nation,* have been clearly demonstrated, had not our system of finance been such as to keep in darkness, upon this point,

* This was in 1806. There have been several millions granted in the same way since that time.

men otherwise well-informed. Now, however, the demands upon the taxes must, for the purposes of India, be such as will, I should imagine, open men's eyes, especially if the ministry make and promulgate an authentic statement of the nation's affairs. Thirteen years ago a charter, by the influence of Mr. Pitt and his colleague Dundas, was granted to the East India Company, whereby were secured to the said company of merchants certain rights of sovereignty in, and, with some exceptions, an exclusive trade with, those countries in Asia, which we, taking them all together, call the East Indies. As the foundation of their firm, or partnership, of trade, this company were allowed by the Charter, to create a quantity of stock; that is to say, to make loans, in the same way that the ministry do, and to pay annually, or quarterly, in dividends, interest upon the amount of these loans. The company became, in fact, a sort of under government, having its loans, its scrip, its debt, or, more properly speaking, its funds, or, still more properly, its engagements to pay interest to a number of individuals. The paper, of whatever form it may be, which entitles the holder to demand this interest, or these dividends, is called *East India Stock*, the principal of which has now been augmented to the sum of 12 millions sterling; and, the holders of this stock are called *East India Proprietors*. The sources, whence the means of regularly discharging the interest upon the stock were to be derived, were, of course, the profits of the trade which the company should carry, but, aided by the revenue which they were authorized to raise from their territory, the defence and government of which were, however, placed, in some sort, under the control of the mother government at Westminster. Thus set out in the world this company of sovereigns, furnished, at once, with dominions, subjects, taxes, and a funded debt. But, supposing the measure (which I do only by way of illustration) to have been, in other respects, just and politic, it certainly would have been neither, not to have bound these sovereigns to pay the nation something, or, more properly speaking, to contribute something towards the taxes, by way of consideration for the immense advantages to be derived from the exclusive trade of a country, while the nation might be called upon, as it has been, to defend in a naval war, and which must, at any rate, be defended on the land-board by troops drawn, in part at least, from the population of the kingdom.

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It was, therefore, provided, that the Company, during the continuance of its charter, which was to be for twenty years (thirteen of which have now nearly expired,* should pay into the Exchequer £500,000 sterling a year, and that, upon all the money not so paid, an interest would arise and accumulate, at the rate of fifteen per centum.—Such were the principal engagements, on both sides, under which this Company started. The nation has fulfilled its engagements, and that, too, at an enormous expenditure both of men and of money; and, while the Company has been enjoying all the advantages of an exclusive trade, and all the receipts of a territorial revenue; while hundreds and thousands of persons, concerned in that trade, have amassed fortunes so great as to overshadow and bear down, not only the clergy and the country gentlemen, but even the ancient nobility of the kingdom, not one penny (since the *first* year) has the Company ever paid into the Exchequer of the stipulated half-million a year; and, what is still more glaringly unjust, and more galling to the burdened people, two millions of our taxes have already been granted to this Company, wherewith to pay the dividends upon their stock; and, such has been the management, and such is now the state, of the Company's affairs, that we need not be at all surprised if another million be called for from us, during this present session of parliament! For the causes of this state of the Company's concerns; for the reasons why they have not been held to their engagements; why the act of parliament has thus been treated as if it had been passed merely as a job; why we have been called upon to *pay* to, instead of *to receive* from, this company of trading sovereigns; let the eulogists of Mr. Pitt's memory; let Mr. Canning and Old Rose; let Lord Melville, with his £2,000 a year pension from the Company (who are so *poor* as to come to us for money); let the Directors, those managers of the Company's affairs, and those staunch advocates of the Minister that suffered the act to lie unenforced against them; let Lord Wellesley, who has so long been the Governor-General of India, why the act has not been enforced, why the law has been thus set at nought, let these persons tell.

It seems incredible, that these things should have been; but, not only were they so up to the year 1806, they are so up to this hour, except, that *four millions*

more of money have, since that time, been advanced by the nation to the Company, instead of the nation having *received*, as it ought to have done, *nine millions and a half* of principal money from the Company, with accumulated interest at *fifteen per centum*. The nation engaged to do certain things and to grant certain privileges to the Company: these things have been done and these privileges granted; but, of the money, which we were to receive in return, only one half million out of twenty half millions has ever been received by us. The Company entered into certain engagements with the nation: amongst these engagements was that of paying, on the part of the Company, under certain provisions and penalties, the sum of £500,000 a year into the King's exchequer, as an equivalent, in part, for the exclusive advantages granted and secured to the Company by the nation. In case of failure to fulfil this important provision of the act of Charter (being the 33 Geo. III. Chap. 52), the lords of the Treasury, of whom Mr. Pitt, afterwards Mr. Addington, and then Mr. Pitt again, then Lord Grenville, then Perceval, and now Lord Liverpool, have been at the head, were to take certain steps, and to make certain reports, thereon to the parliament. It is now nearly 20 years since the act of charter was passed, of these 20 years the first year only has seen a payment made by the Company into the Exchequer, the Company owing, therefore, to the nation 6 millions sterling, with, as the act provides, accumulated interest at 15 per centum a year; yet, in the whole of this series of years, during this long scene of defalcation and of forfeiture, have the Lords of the Treasury, though so positively thereunto enjoined by the act, never taken any steps whatever, and never made any report to parliament relating to the subject. It is possible, and, indeed, likely, that the present Lords of the Treasury will make a report agreeably to the law; but, that report cannot remove, or shake, any of the facts that I have stated. I have fairly stated the nature of the agreement between the nation and the Company; and it will, I imagine, require no very long time for any unbiassed man to decide, whether the nation ought again to trust this Company with the advantages that it before enjoyed. I am not only for throwing open the trade, but for taking the sovereign authority wholly out of the hands of the Company. I am for not listening to them for a single

* The 20 years are now about to expire.

moment, until they have paid up their arrears with interest agreeably to the law.

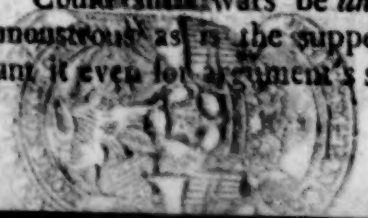
But, you will ask, "what do they say for themselves: what defence do they set up: what excuse do they make for not paying the stipulated sums to the nation?" The excuse they make is this: that they have been engaged in expensive, *unavoidable wars*; and, they say, that the Act of Charter provides, that, in such a case, they *shall be excused*. Yes; but, only for a time; the sums are still to be *due to the nation*; and *interest is to run on* against the Company. In fact, the law allows of a *postponement* only, and not that, except upon a report and recommendation of the Lords of the Treasury made to the parliament; and, no such report has ever been made. In short, there is no legal defence; no legal defence can be made; the Company owes the nation the 9 and a half millions sterling, and, in this situation it has the assurance to come forward and reproach the ministry with a *design* not to trust it again to the same extent as it was trusted before. What would any man think of a tenant, who, during a term of twenty years, should pay but one year's rent, and who should then becall his landlord for refusing a renewal of his lease? What you would think of such a man, you will readily think of this Company; but, you will not easily find terms to express your contempt of the landlord who should be fool enough to assent to such renewal.

Let us, for argument's sake, take the word of these trading sovereigns; let us, however common sense forbids it, believe them for once. Let us suppose, that they, while they have been dividing their gains so largely, have spent the 9 and a half millions in *wars*. With *whom* have they been at war? With those who were *attacking England*? Oh, no! With the natives of a country at nine months' sail from our shores; with a people whom Mr. Robert Grant, in his late speech in favour of the Company, described as "the most *pusillanimous, unresisting and weak* in the world." This is the people, in wars against whom, they say they have spent so much as to be thereby rendered incapable of paying the sums due to the nation as a compensation for advantages given up to their exclusive possession. Could such wars be *necessary*? Could such wars be *just*? Could such wars be *unavoidable*? But, monstrous as is the supposition, let us grant it even for argument's sake; and,

then, I ask what better reason can there be for not renewing their charter; what better reason for not again putting any of the power of government in their hands; what better reason for wholly breaking up their corporation? If from their Charter such scenes of blood and devastation have arisen, shall we consent to a renewal of that charter? The very excuse for their defalcation furnishes the best possible reason for the adoption of some measure that shall for ever put an end to their power.

I beg, most thinking people, once more to draw your attention to the nature of the argument contained in the Act of Charter, before referred to. The nation grants to the Company, the power of raising a revenue upon the millions of people in India; and, it further grants it a trade to India, while it stipulates to exclude from that trade, supposed to be very advantageous, all the rest of the King's subjects; and while it agrees to send out forces, by land and water, for the protection of the trade and the territory against foreign enemies. In return for all this the nation is to receive, in money paid into the exchequer, £500,000 a year, during the 20 years that the Charter is to last. This sum was, of course, to go in aid of the taxes; and, 10,000,000 of pounds would have been something worth having. But, only half a million of this has been paid: the rest, we are told, has been spent in wars; in "just and necessary wars;" and, we have advanced them *five millions* besides. A very pretty way this of executing the terms of the Charter! A decent way of *fulfilling a bargain*!

What the nation now demands is, that another such a bargain shall not be made; and, the ministry propose, that the trade shall be open; that other English merchants shall trade to India; that a country, the possession of which is, like Jamaica or any other Colony, held by the means of the national taxes, shall be open to all the King's subjects. And, what can be more just; what more reasonable; what more moderate than this proposition? Why should not all the people of the kingdom be free to profit from a territory, of which they all assist in maintaining the possession. Whether India ought to be held *as a colony* at all, is another question, to be hereafter considered; but, while it be so held, or whether it be so held or not, can any man devise a good reason for continuing the trade a monopoly in the hands of a Com-



pany, who, as experience proves, will pay the nation nothing for such monopoly?

The opposition, which the *City of London* is making to the measure, proposed to be adopted, arises from a motive of the same sort as that which actuates the East India Company: namely, a preference of their own interests to those of their fellow-subjects at large. But, before I enter upon this subject more minutely, let me notice certain passages, in the speeches of Mr. FAVELL and Mr. Alderman BIRCH, during the debate of the 25th instant.

Mr. FAVELL said, there was "great danger of transferring the government of India from the Company to the *British Ministry*. Now, Lord Buckinghamshire expressly threatened the Company with "a new Administration of India; and therefore his worthy Friend, when he saw Government on the point of *laying hold of the Indian army*, would certainly be disposed to stand forward and resist in time, what, if adopted, would effectually put an end to every thing like resistance to the measures of the Executive of this country." Mr. BIRCH said, "He had no doubt that this was the first of a series of measures by which the whole of the revenue of India would be taken by Government. They would thus obtain by stratagem, what, in the beginning, they durst not ask."

This is a sort of doctrine that I cannot comprehend; and, I wonder how Mr. Favell and Mr. Birch have arrived at the discovery, that there is danger in putting the government, and Mr. Birch in putting the revenue, of India into the hands of those who have in their hands the government and revenue of England. If they mean to say, that the present ministry are unfit to be intrusted with the government and revenue of England; or, that any ministry that can be chosen in the present state of the representation in parliament are unfit to be intrusted with the government and revenue of England, that gives rise to a new question; but, to say, that the same men, who are fit to be intrusted with the ruling and the taxing of us at home, are unfit to be intrusted with the ruling and taxing of Hindostan, or, at least, more unfit than a Company of merchants living and holding their Court in London, is, to me, a proposition that requires very good arguments indeed to maintain it. For my part, my taste is the opposite of those of these Gentlemen. I would much rather trust the ministers with an

army and a revenue in India than in England; and I would a million to one rather trust them with an army and a revenue in England, than I would trust the same in the hands of the East India Company, who are a body of men, of the individuals forming which body no one knows any thing. It is a non-descript sort of sovereign, from whose sway every man of common sense must wish to be preserved. The taste of Mr. Birch must be very curious. He has always been on the side of every ministry. There has been no act of their's, that I have ever observed, which he has not supported. He has no objection to trust them with the distribution of the 70 or 80 millions a year, which they raise upon the people of this kingdom; but he is in terrible alarm at their getting possession of the "whole revenue of India!"

I would ask these two gentlemen, whether they seriously believe, that the ministry, that any ministry, that the present or any other, would, or could, make a worse use of power, than has been made of power by the East India Company? What could they do more than spend the revenues of India in wars? Has war ever ceased since the Company's Charter was granted? And, what could any ministry do worse than this? The excuse for not paying the nation the 9 and a half millions of money is, that it has been expended in necessary wars. Is it not time to take the government of thirty millions of people out of such hands? Whether it is likely to fall into better hands I do not pretend to know; but, here I come to close quarters with Mr. Birch; for, I say, that those whom he thinks good enough to govern England, I think quite good enough to govern India.

Mr. BIRCH even asserted, that the adoption of the proposed measure would be a violation of the Company's Charter: "He considered the proposed innovation as a violation of the East India Company's Charter, and a daring confiscation of property. Their Charter had been renewed from time to time; their property had been embarked in numerous establishments on the faith of it; and now, when these had attained maturity, the Company were to be turned out, that others might enjoy the fruits of their labours. Unless the safety of the State were concerned, Charters ought never to be infringed." I do not know, for my part, where men find confidence sufficient to make assertions like these. The

measure cannot be a violation of the Charter. The term of the Charter will have expired. The nation has fulfilled its part of the agreement. It was a grant for 20 years, and, when the 20 years shall have been completed, the nation has, surely, a right to resume its possession. What an impudent man should we think a tenant, who, at the expiration of his lease, should accuse his landlord of a violation of it, because he refused to renew it? "A daring confiscation of property!" What language applied to such a case! Mr. Birch could see no confiscation of property in the selling of a part of an Englishman's estate under what is called the redemption of the land tax; but, the refusing to grant a new Charter to the East India Company, he calls a daring confiscation of property! The Company have embarked, he says, in numerous establishments, on the faith of the Charter. What faith? The faith of its lasting 20 years. No other faith did the nation pledge; and that faith, notwithstanding all the defalcations of the Company, the nation has kept. What reason, then; what reason, in the name of common sense, have the Company to complain?

"Now," says Mr. BIRCH, "the Company are to be turned out, that others may enjoy the fruits of their labour." How are others to enjoy the fruits of the Company's labour? The Company have pocketed those fruits themselves. They have had their lease out, though they have paid but one year's rent out of twenty; and how, then, are others to get at the fruits of their labour. Besides, who are these "others" that Mr. Birch talks of so slightly? They are nothing less than all the people of the kingdom, able to embark in the India trade. It is the nation, in short, who, at the expiration of a lease, re-enters its demised estate; and this is what Mr. Birch terms "others;" and this act of re-entry he calls a violation of the charter and a daring confiscation of property. The worthy Alderman has only to apply his doctrine to the affairs of private life, and he will go a great deal farther than even the abused sans-culottes of France ever dreamt of going.

SIR WILLIAM CURTIS, during this debate, expressed his fears, that a free trade to India might cause the introduction of political freedom. "If a free trade to India were once allowed, among other exports, they would probably soon have a variety of politicians, who would use their best

"endeavours to give the Hindoos a conception of the Rights of Man."—A most alarming thought, to be sure! Sir William Curtis is, then, for no rights of man. He is for keeping the poor slaves, slaves still. His wishes, however, will not be accomplished, I believe; and, he may yet live long enough to see men claiming and asserting their rights all over the world. But, what a sentiment is this from an Englishman! His objection to an unrestricted intercourse with another part of the world, is, that it may lead to the teaching of enslaved men their rights! This is the objection which one of the Aldermen, who is also a member of parliament, for the great City, has to the opening of the trade to India. Commerce has, by many writers, been applauded for having produced an extension of knowledge and of freedom; but, this man objects to it on that account; he fears that the opening of trade may tend to the enlarging of the mind of man; he is afraid that a free intercourse would break the chains of a people! Let us hope, that there are very few assemblages of men in the world where such a sentiment would not have been received with an unanimous exclamation of horror. And yet, I dare say, that Sir William Curtis is one of those who talks well about the despotism of Buonaparté's government, and who is loud in his prayers for the deliverance of Europe. I dare say he is one of those who is for the deliverance of every body but those whom we may deliver at any hour that we please. Now, I am for beginning the work of deliverance that is within our own power; and, having closed that, then call upon Buonaparté to follow our example.

The arguments urged in favour of the opposition by the City of London I shall notice in my next, as well as the statements and reasoning in some of the speeches at the India House. In the mean while I shall insert below the copies of Lord Buckinghamshire's letters, containing the statement of the intentions of the Ministers, together with a letter of remonstrance on the part of the Directors, which documents are necessary to be attentively read, in order to enter with advantage on a further discussion of the subject.

WM. COBBETT.

Botley, 28th January, 1813.

INDIA COMPANY.

Tuesday, Jan. 5.—A General Special Court of Proprietors of East India Stock

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was held this day, within their Court Room, at the India-House, Leadenhall-Street, on special affairs, connected with the Company's Charter.

Sir HUGH INGLIS, the Chairman, having taken the chair, addressed the Meeting, and informed them that this Court had been specially summoned for the purpose of submitting to their consideration certain papers which had passed between Ministers and the Court of Directors, on that most important subject—the renewal of the Company's Charter; and he was sorry to have to inform them, that the present appearance of the negotiation presented a most unfavourable aspect. The papers should be read to them, and he was concerned to think would prove what he had now said. The last letter had only been received at a late hour last night, of course there had been no time to make any reply to it. When the papers should be read he was satisfied they would make a deep impression on every one present. He did not pretend to speak the sentiments of the Court of Directors, but simply to express the feelings of himself individually, and undoubtedly, on his mind, they had made a very deep impression.—The papers were accordingly read, and consisted chiefly of Minutes of the Secret Committee of Correspondence of the Court of Directors, communicating to the whole Court the different steps in the progress of their communications with the President of the Board of Control. The first was a Minute of the Secret Committee of Correspondence, of date 27th November, 1812, stating a communication made to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, on the part of the President of the Board of Control, that it was the intention of Ministers not to depart from the principle they had already intimated to the Company, namely, to extend the trade with India to the Out-ports; but that this might be limited to a certain number of ports less than those specified in the Warehousing Act. On this subject, however, the Noble Lord (Buckinghamshire) wished that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman should have a conference with Lord Liverpool and himself.—Then follows a letter from the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Court of Directors to the Earl of Buckinghamshire, dated the 28th November, stating that they had communicated to the Secret Committee the terms of his Lordship's last intimation, which the Secret Committee had received with concern and regret, concurring in opinion, as they did with the

Chairman and Deputy Chairman, that the opening of the Import Trade from India, even to a small number of the out-ports, would be highly injurious to the Revenue, destructive to the Company, and highly detrimental to all the merchants, manufacturers, ship-owners, &c. now engaged in the trade with India, from the river Thames. They beg that his Lordship will allow a deputation to wait on him and Lord Liverpool on the following Tuesday, so that they may be enabled to lay the result before the Court of Directors on the next day.—Lord Buckinghamshire, in answer states, that he shall be happy to see them.—The interview accordingly took place; but it was agreed, that no minute of the conversation should be made; but that Ministers should make a full communication of their intentions to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.—After this follows a Minute of the Secret Committee of Correspondence, of 16th December, by which the Chairman and Deputy Chairman are requested to persevere in their opposition to the extension of the Import Trade from India to the different Out-Ports in the Kingdom, as being a measure ruinous in its consequences to the country, and to the East India Company.

No. LXVI.

At a Secret Court of Directors, held on Friday, the 18th December, 1812, the Court having resolved itself into a Committee of the whole Court, and being resumed, the following Report from the Committee of the whole Court was read.—The Committee taking into consideration the present state of the negotiation with His Majesty's Ministers, for the renewal of the Company's exclusive privileges, deem it to be highly important, that the sentiments of the Court of Directors, upon the proposition brought forward for admitting the imports from India to the out-ports of this kingdom, should be unequivocally known.—The Committee therefore recommend to the Court to pass a Resolution, stating that the proposition in question is, for various reasons already set forth in the Court's writings, pregnant with ruin to the affairs of the Company, inasmuch as it would render them incapable of performing the functions allotted to them, as well in their commercial as in their political capacity, and that the Court cannot, therefore, consistently with their duty to their Constituents, recommend to them the adoption of such a proposition.—And it was, on the question,—Resolved unanimously, That this Court approve the said

Report.—And the Chairman and Deputy Chairman were requested to wait on the Right Honourable the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, and to communicate to his Lordship the above proceedings of this day.

No. LXVII.

At a Secret Court of Directors held on Tuesday, the 22d December, 1812, the Chairman acquainted the Court, that in obedience to their Resolution of the 18th instant, the Deputy and himself, on Saturday last, waited on the Right Honourable the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, with a copy of the Minutes of the Secret Court of the 18th instant.

No. LXVIII.

At a Secret Committee of Correspondence, the 28th December, 1812, read a letter from the Right Honourable the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, dated the 24th instant, and—Paragraphs proposed to form part of the draught of a letter to his Lordship in reply.

No. LXIX.

At a Secret Court of Directors, held on Monday, the 28th December, 1812, Minutes of the 15th, 16th, 18th, and 22d instant, were read and approved.—Read a letter from the Right Honourable the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, dated the 24th instant; also—Paragraphs proposed to form part of the draft of a letter to his Lordship in reply.

No. LXX.

Letter from the Right Honourable the Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, referred to in the preceding Minutes.

India Board, Dec. 24, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,—The conferences held at this Board with the Committee of Correspondence, having had for their object the most unreserved and candid discussions upon points of the greatest importance, with respect to the renewal of the East India Company's Charter, and it having been understood that no further steps should be taken upon the subject, until a communication was made by me, in an official shape, to the Court of Directors, it was not without some surprise that the copy of their resolution of the 18th instant was received by His Majesty's Government, because that resolution, adopted under such

circumstances, appeared to them to have for its object an abrupt termination to all discussion.—They cannot, however, consider it the less incumbent upon them, through you, as the proper official channel to bring before the Court of Directors the principle upon which the opinions I have to apprise you of have been formed, in order to present to the Proprietors and the public a correct view of a subject to which so much importance is attached.—I shall, therefore, convey to you the sentiments of His Majesty's Government, precisely in the terms I should have done, if no intimation had been made of the resolution of the Court of Directors of the 18th instant; and with that object I proceed to inform you that with regard to those points, to which the attention of the Committee of Correspondence has been chiefly directed at the conferences held at this Board, the principle uniformly maintained, as the basis of any arrangement for the renewal of the East India Company's Charter, viz. that the merchants of this country have as substantial claim to as much liberty of trade as they can enjoy, without injury to other important national interests, cannot be departed from.—It was in the hope that the opening of the export with India to the merchants of the City of London and of the outports, whilst the import was confined to the port of London, might not be found inconsistent with this principle, that a disposition was felt by the Government to propose an arrangement to that effect.—In consequence, however, of the promulgation of such an intention, several persons, interested in the commerce of the out-ports, represented in the strongest terms, that the proposed limitation of the import trade from India, rendered the extension of the export of no value to them; and they declared themselves prepared to maintain, that this limitation was not called for by any adequate motive of public interest.—They urged their claim to an equal participation in the general trade to India, and their conviction, that the ground upon which the exclusion in favour of the port of London was defended, viz. the additional danger of smuggling, could not be supported, and they were satisfied that the alleged danger might be obviated by revenue regulations. They also entered largely into the subject of the China trade, contending strenuously against the renewal of the Company's exclusive Charter, and stated their reasons for believing, that measures might be adopted by which that

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trade could be opened, without injury to the revenue, and without hazarding the continuance of the intercourse with the Emperor of China's dominions.—The importance attached to these representations, induced His Majesty's Government to revise the arrangement which had been in contemplation; and although they did not see cause, under all the circumstances bearing upon this question, to alter the opinion they had entertained, of the propriety of continuing the existing restrictions upon the commercial intercourse with China, and of preserving to the Company the monopoly of the tea-trade, they nevertheless felt, that the merchants belonging to the outports had established a claim against an absolute restriction of the import trade to the port of London.—Under this impression, I addressed my letter to you on the 27th of April ultimo.—The observations made by the Committee of Correspondence, in their reply of the 29th of the same month, did not fail to engage the serious attention of His Majesty's Government, but after the best examination of those observations, aided by all the information they have obtained from the Boards of Customs and Excise, they are not enabled to concur in the opinion, that the proposed extension of the import trade from India would be productive of any great increase of smuggling, and certainly not to the extent stated by the Court of Directors.—It is conceived, that the apprehensions entertained on this account might be obviated by various regulations, such as confining the trade to those ports which are, or may be so circumstanced, as to afford security to the due collection of the revenue; by the limitation of it to vessels of four hundred tons burden; by attaching the forfeiture of the ship and cargo to the discovery of any illicit articles on board; by an extension of the manifest act; by regulations for checking the practice of smuggling in the ships of the Company; as well as by other provisions, too minute to be entered into at present, but which will, of course, be attended to, in discussing the details of the subject.—I am persuaded it will not escape your observation, that from obvious considerations, the English Channel must, at all times, especially in time of peace, afford facilities and inducements for smuggling, which do not occur elsewhere to the same extent, on account of the clandestine traffic already established, and the ready communication with the opposite shore.—But, with re-

spect to the whole of this part of the question, it is impossible to lose sight of the deep interest which the Government must feel in the prevention of smuggling. The interests of the Company are, no doubt, involved in it; but those of the Government are still more concerned; and it cannot be supposed that they would bring forward any proposition, which appeared to them likely to endanger a revenue of from three to four millions; or that, if a defalcation should unexpectedly arise, they would not immediately take measures for applying a remedy. The Company have, therefore, an ample ground of confidence, not only in the disposition of Government, but in their effectual co-operation on those points, on which the Court of Directors appear to feel the greatest anxiety, and on which they urged their strongest objections to the proposed arrangements.—The several articles which may be imported from the countries within the limits of the Company's Charter, and which are charged with an *ad valorem* duty, although, with the exception of tea, they bear a very small proportion to the whole of the revenue collected from the Trade from India and China, are nevertheless of sufficient importance to demand the attention of Government, as the question may affect the interests of the East India Company, as well as those of the public revenue.—With this view, it will be necessary to consider whether, with respect to some of them, a rated duty might not be substituted, and whether regulations may not be made for the security of the duty *ad valorem* on those articles which shall continue to be so charged, and which, at the same time shall prevent their being purchased at a price likely to operate injuriously to the manufacturers of this country.—The justice of the observations respecting the additional number of Europeans that would find their way to India in consequence of the extension of the trade, must be admitted to a certain extent; but it is obvious, that this danger would arise from the extension of the export trade to India, and would scarcely be lessened by confining the import trade to the Port of London. Every individual, during his residence in India, would of course be subject to the existing regulations of the local Governments.—The situation of Lascars, who are occasionally employed in the navigation of ships from India to this country, would demand the humane interposition of the Legislature; and there can be no doubt that

effectual provision for their maintenance while in England, and for their return to India, will be made.—Having gone through the principal points to which our recent conferences have related, it may be proper for me to apprise you, that His Majesty's Government are of opinion, that the establishment of King's troops, which may be requisite for the preservation of the peace and security of the British possessions in India, must depend upon circumstances that it would be difficult to anticipate; but as the financial situation of the Company may render it necessary, that the numbers to be maintained at their charge should be

(To be continued.)

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

Motives of the Senatus Consultum for putting 350,000 Men at the Disposal of the Minister of War.

(Continued from page 128.)

quished in every battle, was forced to abandon his capital to the victor, but he gave it to the flames, which almost reduced it to ashes. From thence the necessity of this glorious retreat, a retreat in which we have not been disheartened by the asperity of the climate, the early severity of the season, and its unusual excessive rigour.—The 29th Bulletin of the Grand Army at once astonished and re-assured France; the information of its losses unveiled to the nation with so much energetic simplicity, with such a noble confidence, awakened in all Frenchmen a feeling of the necessity of repairing them.—Meanwhile the Emperor, who his enemies must always fear, and whose arrival was wished for by his allies and his subjects, returned to his capital whilst he was believed to be still before Wilna, and causing an account to be rendered him of the resources of his arsenals, his magazines, his treasury, of the number of his troops—announced to France his intention of not making any demand of men nor of new contributions.—With the annual imposts and the soldiery already under arms, he can support all the wants of the campaign both in the South and in the North of Europe.—But, Senators, the facts of which the Minister for Foreign Affairs has just given you information by His Majesty's orders, must alter the first calculations of his wisdom, economical in the sacrifices of his people, and cause them to be succeeded by calculations

of foresight and necessity.—Already, Messieurs, I have seen in this assembly bursts of that indignation which all Europe will feel at the recital of a treason to which we would hesitate to give belief were it not avowed and written by its author himself.—The Prussian General, whose name must henceforth become infamous, betrayed at once his Sovereign, his honour, the duties of a citizen, and those of a soldier.—He shamefully separated himself from the army of which he formed a part of the corps with which he marched; he has given up those who were exposed, upon his faith, to the hazardous consequences of his base abandonment, of his unexpected desertion.—

—Informed of this crime, new in the history of modern wars, his Majesty the King of Prussia evinced a resentment worthy of his fidelity to his Allies. Joined in sentiments with the Monarch, his Cabinet has only shewn the wish of repairing—of punishing a political and military crime, which offends the Prussian nation, and outrages its Sovereign.—These facts, these assurances are contained in the letters of which the Minister for Foreign Affairs has given you a communication.—The guarantee that the heinousness of this event will not only be appreciated by the Government, but by the whole Prussian people, They will judge, and all the nations of the North will judge with them, of what misfortunes such a crime might be the source. Prussia will shew her attachment to the Prince who governs her, by rallying at his example, and the voice of honour, and by the faithful observation of treaties.—Nevertheless, policy, attentive for many years to the cause of events, will necessarily pause respecting the causes which have effected what I have just spoken of to you, and these causes, Senators, do not appear improper to be rapidly traced here. We evidently find them in the manœuvres and intrigues of England upon the Continent. Too weak to defend herself alone upon the sea against the French power, she has constantly and successively laboured to arm against us all European Cabinets. It is England who has brought and re-brought upon the fields of battle the armies which the Emperor has conquered and re-conquered during the last twelve years.—When enlightened Cabinets, by experience, wished for peace, the peace which rejoiced Europe made England groan. Then she scattered among the people, and particularly in large cities, by means of her numerous emissaries and active corruption, the seeds of

hatred, the causes of division, the principles of disorganization, which separate subjects from their Princes, and people from their governments.—It was thus that numerous societies, under the name of Friends of the Truth, of Nature, &c. &c. or under other titles less ridiculous, have been formed, encouraged, and supported, preaching hatred, insurrection, and disobedience, against every Sovereign, the friend of France, of Peace, and the Continent.—Alas! it was in our France—now so peaceable, then so miserable and so agitated,—that the English Cabinet made, during several years, which were years of crimes and misfortunes, the trial of these fatal means of discord and civil troubles.—It was by these means that England acted in 1809 against the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, when it shewed friendly dispositions towards France. It was by her agents that England prepared in Russia the influence of the party hostile to France, and by it arose the hesitations, the variations, the hostile resolutions of the Cabinet; and in short, this last war, which has cost Russia the devastation of her finest provinces, the repose of Europe, the regrets of humanity.—England has employed, without doubt, to prepare the eternal dishonour of General D'York, the same means, the same associations, by which in 1809 she brought regular corps into a rebellion, and (a thing before unheard of) to make war against the orders even of their Sovereign.—Thus England disunites and divides the countries over which she cannot domineer; she prepares the ruin of states which she cannot subject to her system.—In short, what means of destruction more inevitable for the throne the most strongly secured, than the desertion of an army; its opposition to the interests of its country; its disobedience to the orders of its Monarch; if all the Sovereigns interested in the suppression of such a crime, do not unite their vows to cause their efforts to ensure the punishment of it, it will not be in their power to prevent a recurrence of it.—Happily, Gentlemen, the attempts of our enemies to extend to France their fatal influence, their fatal successes, are impotent.—Our vast territory, our immense population, feel only the sacrifices inseparable from the state of war; but are far from suffering the misfortunes of the country which is its theatre.—Internally, tranquillity prevails; industry, the arts, the public works, pursue their course.—Externally, Austria and our other allies shew themselves affectionate and faith-

ful.—Our forces, our means, our military resources are immense.—Always at the moment when the first eruption of those destructive volcanos fired by England, is going to break out under those thrones which wish to rest independent of her politics, it is necessary to collect proportionable resources, even superior to the dangers which prudence discovers.—That which was yesterday sufficient for the security of Government, is to-day found to be deficient in foresight. New events have created new wants; unforeseen conjunctures require unexpected sacrifices.—An universal sentiment of devotion and fidelity unites itself in the French people to the feelings of their interest and of their glory, to direct their conduct, and determine their resolutions.—His Majesty proposes to you, to put at the disposal of his Minister at War, a force sufficiently considerable to overawe all our enemies, to destroy all their hopes in all their suppositions; and you know, Messieurs, reflection and history has taught it you, that it is thus we must repulse danger, it is thus that success is guaranteed, that we ensure glory, and that we must prepare peace.—The number of men demanded by the minister at War, are to be divided into three classes:—The first is to be composed of those cohorts whose wishes have outstripped necessity, and who have solicited as a favour, to exchange the duty of defending the frontiers of France, for the honour of going to seek the enemy on the other side of the Siennas.—The second class consists of a levy among those men, who forming part of the four preceding Conscriptions are not comprised in the last.—The levy has for its object, to keep up in the interior, until the moment when they shall have acquired a greater strength, a more decided aptitude for the military service: the third class, called by the *Senatus Consultum*, I would denominate the Conscription of 1814.—This is not to be immediately assembled; the Minister at War will judge at what moment it will be suitable to cause them to march. The efforts of the Islanders, founders of the Continental war, spectators of a war without end, create an imperious law on the part of France, of setting on foot formidable armaments. She has not forgotten either the victors under Louis 14th, nor the disgraceful treaties under Louis 15th; neither will she forget the triumphs which have effaced those humiliations, the necessity of preserving untainted the glory she has acquired, the utility of preparing for new successes,

the dignity of the crown, or the honour of the nation, and of the French arms."—The project of the *Senatus Consultum* was referred to a Special Committee, and the Senate adjourned until to-morrow.

Copy of a Letter from Count St. Marsen to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Berlin, Jan. 1.

"Monseigneur,—An Aid-de-Camp from the Duke of Tarente, dispatched by the Prince of Neufchatel, has reached me. He brought me the enclosed dispatch from the Major-General, with the letters which accompanied it. The whole arrived at the moment when I was in the house of Marshal the Duke of Castiglione, with the Chancellor Baron de Hardenberg, Count de Narbonne, and Prince de Hatzfeld. Baron Hardenberg appeared indignant; he immediately went to the King, who had just returned to the city. I am assured the King has determined to dismiss General D'York, cause him to be arrested, give the command to General Kleist, call upon the troops, although there is but very little probability that they can be withdrawn, and to enjoin them to place themselves under the orders of the King of Naples; to address all orders to this Prince; to publish to the French army at Potsdam, in Silesia, in the Gazettes, an *Ordre du Jour* in consequence.—In short, I am assured, that on this occasion the King has again publicly manifested his attachment to the cause of his Imperial Majesty and King, and his indignation at what had just taken place.—I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) The COUNT DE ST. MARSEN."

No. II.

Letter from the Duke of Tarente to the Prince Major-General.

Tilsit, Dec. 31.

"Monseigneur,—After four days of expectation, inquietude, and anguish, which one part of the Prussian corps has experienced respecting the fate of the rear-guard, which, from Mittau followed me at one march distant, I at last am informed, by a letter from General D'York, that he himself had decided the fate of the Prussian corps.—I here transmit a copy of this letter, upon which I will not allow myself to make any reflection; it will excite the indignation of every honourable man.—General Massenbach, who was here with me with two batteries, six battalions, and six squadrons, set out this morning without my or-

ders to repass the Niemen. He is going to rejoin General D'York. He thus abandons us before the enemy.—Accept, &c.

(Signed) The Marshal DUKE OF TARENTE."

No. III.

Letter from General D'York to the Duke of Tarente.

Tauroggen, Dec. 30.

"Monseigneur,—After very painful marches, it was not possible for me to continue them without being attacked on my flanks and rear; it was this that retarded my junction with your Excellency, and left me to choose between the alternative of losing the greater part of my troops, and all the materials which alone ensured my subsistence. On saving the whole, I have thought it my duty to conclude a convention, by which the assembling of the Prussian troops is to take place in Eastern Prussia, which, by the retreat of the French army, is in the power of the Russian army. The Prussian troops will form a neutral corps, and will not commit hostilities against either party. Subsequent events, the consequence of negotiations which are to take place between the Belligerent powers, will decide their future fate.—I hasten to inform your Excellency of a proceeding to which I have been forced by weighty circumstances.—Whatever be the judgment that the world may pass upon my conduct, I shall be very indifferent to it. Duty towards my troops, and the most mature deliberation dictated it; the most pure motives, whatever appearances may be, guided me. In making this declaration to you, Monseigneur, I acquit myself of obligation towards you, and beg of you to accept the assurances of the most profound respect, with which I am, &c.

(Signed) D'YORK."

A true copy. (Signed) The Marshal Duke of Tarente, MACDONALD.

No. II.

Letter from Lieut.-General de Massenbach, to Marshal the Duke of Tarente.

"General D'York's letter will already have informed your Excellency, that my last step was dictated to me, and that I could alter nothing, because the precautionary measures which your Excellency ordered to be taken this night, made me suspect, that perhaps you intended to detain me by force, or in the present case disarm my troops. It was, therefore, necessary for me to take the part I did, to

join my troops to the convention which the commanding General had signed, and of which he gave information and instruction this morning.—Your Excellency will pardon my not having personally informed you of the proceeding; it was to spare myself a sensation very painful to my heart, because the sentiments of respect and esteem for the person of your Excellency, which I shall preserve to the end of my life, would have prevented me from doing my duty.

(Signed) The Lt.-Gen. MASSENBAEH.
A true copy, (Signed) Marshal the Duke of TARENTE.

Dec. 31, 1812.

LONDON GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY.

Sunday, Jan. 17.

Foreign Office, Jan. 17.—Dispatches, of which the following are copies, and an extract, have been received by Viscount Castlereagh, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, from General Viscount Cathcart, K. T. His Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of St. Petersburg.

St. Petersburg, Dec. 12, 1812.

My Lord,—I now avail myself of a Swedish courier to forward translations of two Bulletins, viz. one from Major-General Kutousoff, Aid-de-Camp-General, of the 2d December, and one from General Count Wittgenstein, of the 4th December.—Your Lordship will perceive by these reports, that the passage of the Berezyna has cost the French upwards of twenty thousand men, killed, wounded, drowned, and prisoners, and that the remains of Buonaparté's army, with which he is still present, are endeavouring to proceed towards Veleika, while Gen. Wittgenstein's corps is moving upon its right, and with every expectation of getting before it; the Moldavian army upon the left, is moving upon Morodetchno, and the main army, under Count Tormazoff, is moving in a parallel direction to that of the Moldavian army, at no great distance from it, while Count Platoff, with a strong detachment of Cossacks, light cavalry, and light artillery, with the infantry, under General Ekmaloff, is understood to be in front of the French, in the very line they are pursuing.—The French force, as stated by the Admiral, is evidently much over-rated.—The last place named by Count Wittgenstein (Nemenchina) is one or two stages north from Wilna.—

The Russian patriotic levies continue to come forward with unabated zeal, and a new army of fifty thousand infantry and twenty thousand cavalry, from some of the southern provinces, is reported ready for service and assembled.—The French march at night, and halt during the day, in hollow squares; surrounded as they are by the Cossacks, their supplies must be very precarious, and numbers are said to be found dead of cold and famine on every ground their army quits.—The Field Marshal is with the Moldavian army.—Marshal Macdonald is reported, by the Commandant at Riga, to occupy an arc, cutting off the angle formed by the Dwina with the Baltic; his right at Fredericksham, his left at Tukuma, and his centre at Eskay.—He menaces Riga, but probably with intention to prevent interruption to the supplies he wishes to send to meet the French army.—I have the honour to be, &c.

CATHCART.

St. Petersburg, Dec. 17, 1812.

My Lord,—In my dispatch of the 12th inst. your Lordship would find Bulletins, containing reports of Major-General Kutousoff of the 21st December, and of Count Wittgenstein of the 4th December. These reports described Buonaparté, with the remains of his army, as marching from Zembin upon Wilna, through Veleika; the Admiral and General Count Wittgenstein moving upon the same point of Wilna, the former through Molodetchno, the latter by Narotch and Nementchina.—In this part of the pursuit, the Russian corps have stuck very close to the enemy; but the light troops, which got before him, were not of sufficient force to stop him.—His course was altered in consequence of some of the flank attacks, and he arrived at Molodetchno instead of Veleika; and having gained some time by destroying the bridge, he continued his march through Smorgona to Wilna, which place he appears to have reached on the 10th Dec.—The advanced guards of the several Russian columns arrived in the immediate neighbourhood of Wilna nearly at the same time, and the retreating army was compelled to continue its retreat from that town, almost without a halt.—It is said, that an Aid-de-Camp of Marshal Davoust was sent to order the rear-guard to defend itself before Wilna as long as possible; but instead of the French rear-guard, this officer found the Russian advanced-guard, which made him prisoner, having already demolished, or sent to the

rear, the whole of the French rear-guard. —Thanksgiving and *Te Deum* will form part of the church-service to-morrow (being the festival of St. Nicholas) for the defeat of the French army, the capture of one hundred and fifty pieces of ordnance, and several General Officers, together with the occupation of Wilna. —I have the honour to enclose three Reports, being the journal of military operations from the 20th to the 26th of November old style; Marshal Prince Kutousoff's report of the 25th of November, from Badaschkewich, and his intermediate report of the occupation of Wilna, and continuation of the pursuit of the enemy. —The further report is not yet arrived, but I understand the magazines of all sorts to have been well stored, the quantity of ordnance to have been considerable, and that among the prisoners (not less than twenty thousand, many of whom are sick or wounded), there are several General Officers, or officers of distinction, who were under cure, and could not be moved. —Two General Officers were taken in activity. The one I understand to be General Le Fevré, who was a prisoner of war in England on parole, the other an old Polish General. —The apparent direction of the enemy's retreat is towards Kovno; perhaps a column may take the road of Olita. —From the state of the weather, it is possible the Niemen may not be passable, in consequence of floating ice. —The Commanding Officer at Riga reports on the 12th December, that Marshal Macdonald has made no variation in his position. —I am not sure that the number of pieces of ordnance, mentioned in the notification of the *Te Deum* to foreign Ministers, refers to what was taken at Wilna exclusively, or whether it does not include what has been taken since the last general statement that was published. —I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

CATHCART.

Continuation of the Journal of the Military Operations from 3d to 8th December.

Lieutenant-General Schepesefe reports, on the 2d December, that Count Goudovitch was marching with the militia under his orders, seventy thousand strong, upon Mohelow. —Admiral Tchitschagoff reports, on the 1st December, that he was pursuing the enemy in the direction of Semibini and Viamen to Plestschénitza, while the detachment which he had sent in advance to destroy the bridges, annoyed him

in flank. The enemy lost, on the 30th November, seven pieces of cannon, and on the 1st Dec. two pieces; besides a great many prisoners, which are hourly augmenting.

Head-quarters of the Army at Mawenitza, Dec. 3d. —Major-General Toutschakoff reports, on the 17th December, that he arrived on the 8th December, with his corps at Bobruisk. —General Count Platoff reports, on the 1st December, that in pursuing the enemy he had taken one cannon, and made three hundred prisoners, and some officers. —The Aid-de-Camp, Gen. Count Oscharoffsky, was, on the 2d December, with his detachment at Logoiski. The General of Infantry arrived this day with the advanced guard at Kosino. —Admiral Tchitschagoff reports, on the 2d December, that Major-General Lanskoj, whom he had sent with a detachment by Jouriéff to Plestschénitza, on the 29th November, had fallen in with a detachment of the enemy, occupying quarters for the Emperor Napoleon, and had made prisoners General Kaminski, thirty officers belonging to the Staff, with others, and two hundred and seventeen soldiers. The approach of the enemy's columns compelled him to quit this spot, and to move to the left, in order to impede the enemy, and to put as many obstacles as he could to the continuation of their march. Admiral Tchitschagoff having surrounded the enemy on the 1st December, entered with him into Chotinisschi, took five pieces of cannon, seven officers, and above five hundred prisoners. The road by which the enemy is retreating is covered with the dead bodies of men and horses, and we have found there thirty artillery tumbrils and many waggons. —The main army halted at Ravenitza, December the 4th. Major-General Toutschakoff reports, on the 2d, that he arrived with his corps from Bobruisk on that day, at Golinki. General Field-Marshal Prince G. Kutousoff Smolensko, wishing to approach the army under Admiral Tchitschagoff, has removed to-day his head-quarters to Kosino.

December 5. —General Count Platoff reports, on the 1st, that he had joined the advanced guard of Admiral Tchitschagoff, and was at Chothitsche. Having the same day pursued the enemy, he took one piece of cannon, and about one thousand prisoners. The French Officers who have been made prisoners, confirm, that, on the 28th of November, Generals Oudinot, Dombrowski, Sayontschick, and several

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other Brigade Generals, were dangerously wounded.—Head-quarters at Beloroutschie.

Dec. 6.—Head-quarters at Modaschowitsch.

Dec. 7.—Admiral Tchitschagoff reports, on the 4th, that the advanced guard, while pursuing the enemy as far as Latigal, Major-General Orouka's detachment took from the Guards two pair of colours, one piece of cannon, and without reckoning the invalids and the wounded, made 1,500 prisoners, amongst whom were a great many Officers of all ranks, and General Preysiny. In this affair Count Platoff himself headed his regiment of Cossacks.—The Commander of a party, Colonel Sesslavin, reports, that having made a successful attack upon Sahress, he made General Dorgeusal prisoner, and eleven Officers of different ranks; and that he was marching direct upon Wilna, in order to overtake the enemy, upon his march, and attack him at the head of his columns.—General Count Platoff reports, on the 5th December, that during his pursuit of the enemy, and driving him from Molodetichna, he took six pieces of cannon and 500 prisoners; and that Colonel Kaysaroff, whom he had detached with a strong party, had attacked the enemy's cavalry of guards, who were escorting the baggage of Napoleon, killed about 500 of them, took one standard and a part of the baggage, together with some papers of great importance. The head-quarters is with the advanced guard of General Miloradowitch, in order to be near the centre of the military operations.—Colonel Koussiny reports, that he found at Minsk, besides a considerable quantity of bread, about 3,000 excellent French muskets, fabricated at Liege.

Report of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, General Field-Marshal Prince Kutousoff Smolensko, to His Imperial Majesty, dated Head-quarters, at Radaschkawitsch, the 7th December, 1812.

The French army having passed the Berezyna, that of Admiral Tchitschagoff pursued it without intermission, and gained repeated advantages over the enemy, who retired by Pletschenitza, Molodetschno, and Smorgoni, to Wilna. Major-General Lanskoy, who had been sent on the 26th Nov. by Fourieff to Pletschenitza, after having gone 12 miles by cross-roads, on the morning of the 29th, fell upon the advanced-guard of the enemy at Pletschenitza, while it was preparing quarters for

the Emperor Napoleon. The fruits of this unexpected attack were the capture of General Kaminsky, two Colonels, two Lieutenant-Colonels, two Majors, 24 Officers of different ranks, and 217 soldiers. The advanced guard of Admiral Tchitschagoff, in vigorously pursuing the enemy to Chotinisch, took from them five cannons, one Colonel, six Officers, and above 500 prisoners. Besides an inconsiderable loss of men on our side, Major-General Grekoff was slightly wounded by a ball in the head.—The enemy, still pursued by the advanced guard of Admiral Tchitschagoff, was, on the 3d of December, overtaken at Latigal, and vigorously attacked by Major-General Count Ozouzka, when two Saxon standards were taken (which I have now the honour to lay at your Imperial Majesty's feet, by the hands of the Sub-Lieutenant of the Guards, Feutch), and one cannon, and more than 1,500 prisoners, among whom are several Officers, and one General, of whose name I have not yet been informed. The troops of General Count Platoff took a very active part in this affair.—The advanced guard of Admiral Tchitschagoff having approached Molodetschno on the 4th of December, found the bridge destroyed by the enemy; who, having quitted this place about midnight, continued his march to Smorgino. Major-General Count Ozouzka continued his pursuit, took 500 prisoners, and six cannon; besides which, two cannon were found at Molodetschno.—By the report of Admiral Tchitschagoff, of Lieutenant-General Sacken's engagement with the corps of General Regnier, which forms the rear-guard of Prince Schwartzberg, the Austrian troops which were advancing to Slonim, are again returned to Isabeline, to reinforce General Regnier. This movement induced Lieutenant-General Sacken to retire upon Scheremoff, in order to be always in the rear of the enemy, in case this last should attempt to march towards Wilna. By this movement your Imperial Majesty will perceive, that the Prince of Schwartzberg retires from, rather than approaches towards Wilna. However, in order to be quite certain of the direction which he takes, I have ordered the corps of Count Oscharoffsky to manœuvre on the side of Slonim.—I this instant received a report from Count Platoff, accompanied with a Polish standard, which I have the honour to send with this report to your Imperial Majesty.

Report of the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Armies, Field Marshal Prince Kutousoff Smolensko, to His Imperial Majesty, of the 12th of December, 1812.

After a slight resistance the enemy was obliged yesterday to abandon the city of Wilna, which the troops of your Imperial Majesty, under the command of Admiral Tchitschagoff, immediately took possession of. The enemy had not had time to destroy the considerable magazines which he had prepared there: we have taken from him a quantity of cannon. The advanced-guard, and all the army under Admiral Tchitschagoff, are in pursuit of him. I am myself at the distance of 20 wersts from Wilna; but I will not fail to transmit to your Imperial Majesty a detailed report, as soon as I shall arrive there.

Extract of a Dispatch from General Viscount Cathcart, dated St. Petersburg, December 22, 1812.

I have the honour to transmit herewith translations of the continuation of the journal of military operations from the 8th to the 13th of December, and of Marshal Prince Kutousoff Smolensko's report, dated Dec. 14.

Continuation of the Journal of Military Operations, from the 8th to the 13th of December.

Dec. 8.—Admiral Tchitschagoff, in his first report of the 5th, states, that Major-General Count Orouzka had pursued the enemy to Moldetschno, taking 5,000 prisoners and eight pieces of cannon. By his second report of the 7th of December, it appears that his van-guard, under the orders of Major-General Tchablitz, had pressed so close on the enemy's rear, as to carry off his piquets, and subsequently entirely to destroy that corps near Smorgoni, at which place their main body halted, and were not a little surprised to see our Cossacks appear, when they immediately fled with such precipitation as to leave all their magazines. The enemy's loss on this occasion amounted to 25 pieces of cannon and 3,000 prisoners.

Head-quarters, Molodetschino, 9th of December.—The enemy was pursued

from this place on the 7th by Count Orouzka as far as Belitzi, with a loss of nine pieces of cannon and above 1,000 prisoners, a great number of tumbrils, and other carriages. In consequence of the extreme cold, and the great want of provisions, the number of persons perishing along the high roads have considerably increased, amongst whom are noticed many of Napoleon's guard. —Aid-de-Camp General Count Oscharoffsky reports, under date Woloschana, 7th December, that on that day he arrived there, and proposed following the Grand Army in a parallel line, endeavouring at the same time to cover its left flank, and to observe the movements of the corps under Prince Schwartzberg. —Admiral Tchitschagoff reports on the 8th, that his van-guard, commanded by Major-General Tchablitz, continuing to pursue the enemy, and to press him closely, had compelled him to abandon 61 pieces of cannon. Colonel Mordegnasse, Aid-de-Camp General of the Staff, the Aid-de-Camp of Marshal Davoust, and 2,000 men, were made prisoners in this affair. The whole of the road from Smorgoni to Oschnisany was so completely strewn with dead bodies, and dead horses, and covered with artillery waggons, tumbrils, and carriages, that it was rendered almost impassable. —The dissatisfaction amongst Napoleon's troops has increased to such a pitch, that they with one voice charge him as the author of all their misery.

Head-quarters, Smorgonie, Dec. 10.—Colonel Knorring reports, under date of the 8th, that he detached some squadrons to watch the enemy's motions on the side of Novaswerskena and Stalbzef. —General Count Wittgenstein states, that keeping with his corps to the right of Tchitschagoff's army, in a parallel line, he was on the 9th at Nestawischkach. His van-guard at Swiranke, and his cavalry under the command of Aid-de-Camp General Kutousoff, and Major-General Borosdin at Nementschine.

9th December.—The partisan Colonel of the guard, Sesslavia, reports, that having come up with the enemy's cavalry, he immediately attacked them,—they were over-

(To be continued.)